

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	p. 6
The Sanctuary	p. 6
Scope of the Issues	p. 6
Organization of this Document	p. 9
Acknowledgements	p. 9
1. Introduction	p. 10
1.1 NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries	p. 10
1.2 Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary	p. 10
1.3 Building a New Management Plan	p. 11
1.4 Sanctuary Goals and Objectives	p. 13
2. Sanctuary Setting	p. 15
2.1 Northwestern Gulf of Mexico	p. 15
2.2 Institutional Setting	p. 17
2.3 East and West Flower Garden Banks	p. 18
2.4 Stetson Bank	p. 20
2.5 Human Environment	p. 22
3. Action Plans	p. 24
3.1 Introduction	p. 24
3.2 Sanctuary Expansion Action Plan	p. 27
3.3 Education and Outreach Action Plan	p. 34
3.4 Research and Monitoring Action Plan	p. 41
3.5 Resource Protection Action Plan	p. 55
3.6 Visitor Use Action Plan	p. 63
3.7 Operations and Administration Action Plan	p. 69
4. Summary of the Programmatic Environmental Assessment	p. 75
4.1 Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives	p. 75
4.2 Summary of Environmental Consequences	p. 75
5. References	p. 78
Appendices	p. 79
Appendix I: National Marine Sanctuaries Act	p. 79
Appendix II: Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Regulations	p. 104

List of Figures

Figure 1. National Marine Sanctuary System	p. 2
Figure 2. Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary	p. 2
Figure 3. Northwestern Gulf of Mexico	p. 15
Figure 4. Currents in the Gulf of Mexico	p. 16
Figure 5. East Flower Garden Bank	p. 19
Figure 6. West Flower Garden Bank	p. 20
Figure 7. Stetson Bank	p. 21
Figure 8. Sanctuary Advisory Council Recommendation for Boundary Expansion	p. 30

List of Tables

Table 1. Estimated Total Costs of the Flower Garden Banks Management Plan	p. 26
Table 2. Recommendations for Boundary Expansion of Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary	p. 28
Table 3. Estimated Costs for the Sanctuary Expansion Action Plan	p. 32
Table 4. Performance Measures for the Sanctuary Expansion Action Plan	p. 33
Table 5. Estimated Costs for the Education and Outreach Action Plan	p. 39
Table 6. Performance Measures for the Education and Outreach Action Plan	p. 40
Table 7. Estimated Costs for the Research and Monitoring Action Plan	p. 53
Table 8. Performance Measures for the Research and Monitoring Action Plan	p. 54
Table 9. Estimated Costs for the Resource Protection Action Plan	p. 61
Table 10. Performance Measures for the Resource Protection Action Plan	p. 62
Table 11. Estimated Costs for the Visitor Use Action Plan	p. 68
Table 12. Performance Measures for the Visitor Use Action Plan	p. 68
Table 13. Estimated Costs for the Operations and Administration Action Plan	p. 74

List of Acronyms

ACP	Area Contingency Plan
AIS	Automated Identification System
ATBA	Area To Be Avoided
CEA	Cooperative Enforcement Agreement
CFP	Ciguatera Fish Poisoning
CWA	Clean Water Act
DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
DMP	Draft Management Plan
EA	Environmental Assessment
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EFH	Essential Fish Habitat

EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EOAP	Education and Outreach Action Plan
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FGBNMS	Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary
FMP	Fishery Management Plan
GERG	Geochemical and Environmental Research Group
GIS	Geographic Information System
GMFMC	Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Gulf Council)
GREAT	Gulf Reef Environmental Action Team
HAPC	Habitat Areas of Particular Concern
HAZMAT	Hazardous material
IMO	International Maritime Organization
JEA	Joint Enforcement Agreement
MSD	Marine Sanitation Device
MMPA	Marine Mammal Protection Act
MMS	Minerals Management Service (recently changed to BOEMRE)
MOA	Memoranda of Agreement
MPR	Management Plan Review
MSA	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
NAZ	No Activity Zone
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NMSA	National Marine Sanctuaries Act
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOS	National Ocean Service
OAAP	Operations and Administration Action Plan
OCS	Outer Continental Shelf
OCSLA	Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act
OLE	Office for Law Enforcement
OMAO	Office of Marine and Aviation Operations
ONMS	Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
PEA	Programmatic Environmental Assessment
RMAP	Research and Monitoring Action Plan
ROV	Remotely Operated Vehicle
RPAP	Resource Protection Action Plan
SCA	Student Conservation Association
SCUBA	Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus
SEAP	Sanctuary Expansion Action Plan
TABS	Texas Automated Buoy System
TAMUG	Texas A&M University Galveston
USCG	United States Coast Guard
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
VUAP	Visitor Use Action Plan